

***Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Strategic Plan  
July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2010***

**VISION**

A dynamic, evolving organization, the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing will be a recognized, impartial leader in providing innovative, proactive public services to improve the quality of life for deaf and hard of hearing citizens of the Commonwealth.

**MISSION**

Provide effective and efficient leadership, education, advocacy and programs to eliminate barriers and to meet the social, economic, educational, cultural and intellectual needs of deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

**Leadership**

We are committed to providing strong, visionary leadership that encourages risk-taking; advocates for policies and programs for those that we serve; and fosters open supportive communication.

**Innovation**

We are committed to proactive, creative and strategic approaches in the continuous evaluation and improvement of our services.

**Equity**

We are committed to ensuring that all deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians receive equitable, or fair, opportunities to live, work and play just as all other citizens of the Commonwealth.

**Public service as a public trust**

As public servants, we are committed to being open, ethical, responsive, accountable and dedicated to the public we serve and to fostering an honest environment free of bias with respect for all individuals. We are committed to delivering all services fairly and ethically, and will place the needs of deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians at the center of our activities.

**GOAL 1:**

**Improve, strengthen, and develop services, including human and communication services.**

- **KRS 163.510 (4) Mandate: The Commission shall oversee the provision of interpreter services to the deaf and hard of hearing, and may provide services if necessary. The authority to establish a stipend program to encourage interpreters to upgrade skills and certification and to bring both the RID and NAD national certification tests to Kentucky was granted in the 1996 Budget Bill. The authority for the establishment of a centralized interpreter referral service was granted through a budget bill in 1998.**
- **KRS 163.525 Mandate: The commission shall oversee the implementation and operation of a TAP distribution program.**

**Ongoing Objectives:**

- Provide national certification opportunities (RID/NIC) within the Commonwealth of Kentucky.
- Provide interpreter and captioner referral services to state agencies.
- Conduct creative marketing and training opportunities to increase awareness and utilization of the services of the Telecommunications Access Program.
- Conduct creative outreach opportunities for agencies, deaf and hard of hearing consumers, and interpreters to increase awareness and utilization of the Access Center.
- Update and disseminate the Telecommunications Access Program brochures.
- Increase KCDHH involvement in the community by staff participation in deaf and hard of hearing - related community organizations and events.
- Update and provide manuals via email to those interpreters and captioners utilized by the Access Center who have email access.

**Carryover Objectives:**

- **Seek partnerships and research ways of streamlining costs for broadband and computer telecommunications access for deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.**
  - **Collaborate with the Kentucky Telephone Association and phone companies to establish a program that assists with broadband access for deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians on a fixed and limited income.**
  - **Collaborate with Connect Kentucky to reduce the number of deaf and hard of hearing have-nots.**

**New Objectives:**

- **Expand partnerships with other agencies (state, public, private) on how to utilize interpreters effectively.**

**GOAL 2:**

**Serve as a clearinghouse of current information from state and national resources to provide appropriate information and referral services.**

**Ongoing Objectives:**

- Provide current information.
- Make appropriate referrals.
- Provide training opportunities on deaf and hard of hearing issues for the general public.
- Publish the Directory of Services biennially.
- Incorporate the use of information technology to ensure fast and effective delivery of information and referral services to the public.
- Maintain a Deaf Resource Library by purchasing and updating current books/DVDs/materials.
- Continue creative public information campaign to publicize the programs and special projects sponsored by the KCDHH, which benefit deaf and hard of hearing individuals.
- Strengthen the KCDHH Web site to be inclusive of issues and needs of Kentucky's deaf and hard of hearing community.
- Publicize programs and special projects sponsored by the KCDHH that benefit deaf and hard of hearing individuals by

conducting at least ten outreach activity for this purpose. This can be via email, presentations, conferences, newsletter articles, videoconferencing, etc.

**Carryover Objectives:**

- Seek partnerships to update demographic information on deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.
- Incorporate video streaming into website.
- Link KCDHH Deaf Resource Library with other libraries in the state through a library server.
- Provide public forums and announcements to foster discussion by the public on deaf and hard of hearing-related issues and introduce a new Executive Director.
- Provide at least one town hall meeting or issues forums within the fiscal year.
- Develop an aggressive PR program to share information on hearing loss with the public.
  - Meet with the Kentucky Broadcasters Association to get advice on reaching the most people.
  - Meet with the Education Cabinet Communications Office to get advice on reaching the most people.
  - Send out an email blitz to state agencies with a letter of endorsement from the Governor to educate state agencies about KCDHH.
  - Collaborate with private entities to develop a PR focus on deaf and hard of hearing issues.
  - Develop one press release per month bringing the public attention to deaf and hard of hearing issues.

**New Objectives:**

- **Strengthen and maintain partnerships with other state agencies such as the Kentucky State Police, the Kentucky Hospital Association and Kentucky's justice system to educate state entities on the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing, including advocacy and education.**
- **Work in partnership with organizations such as Early Hearing Detection and Intervention and Investing in Family Support to make improvements with early hearing intervention and family support.**

**GOAL 3:**

**Initiate and advise the development of public policy and systems change efforts in cooperation with the Governor; General Assembly; public and private entities; and, governmental agencies.**

- **163.510 (1) Mandate: The commission shall advise the Governor and General Assembly concerning policy and programs to enhance the quality and coordination of services for the deaf and hard of hearing.**
- **163.510 (2) Mandate: The commission shall cooperate with and assist local, state and federal governments and public and private agencies in the development of programs for the deaf and hard of hearing.**
- **163.510 (3) Mandate: The commission shall review legislative programs relating to services to deaf and hard of hearing persons and shall conduct studies of conditions affecting the health and welfare of the deaf and hard of hearing.**

**Ongoing Objectives:**

- Monitor the progress made by the Kentucky Department of Education on Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) of deaf and hard of hearing K-12 students and the implementation plan as approved by the Kentucky Board of Education.
- Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces, and organizations in an advisory capacity to represent the deaf and hard of hearing community on advisory boards and work groups and make appropriate recommendations.
- Continually monitor legislative issues that affect deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.
- Establish time-limited Study Groups that will improve services to deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians for specific topics as approved by the Commission.

**Carryover Objectives:**

- Establish a study group on two of the following:
  - To begin emergency preparedness (emergency notification

communication system, mobilization of available resources during the disaster, and disaster recovery) for Kentucky's deaf and hard of hearing persons.

- To seek ways to improve literacy for deaf and hard of hearing adults and children.
- To discuss the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing in Kentucky and determine the role (indirect vs. direct) of KCDHH in meeting those needs.
- To review accessibility of nursing homes for deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.
- To conduct a study of conditions affecting deaf and hard of hearing senior citizens' health and welfare.

**New Objectives:**

- **Work with the legislature and the Mental Health Advisory Board to facilitate change within the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and improve services and access for deaf and hard of hearing.**
- **Collaborate with the Kentucky Department of Education to measure deaf and hard of hearing students' current scores as well as formulate and execute a strategy to effectively progress toward the goals set for them to score "proficient" on the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) by the year 2014.**

**GOAL 4:**

**Empower constituents by providing leadership training, advocacy, educational, and awareness programs and services.**

- **KCDHH mandates cannot be effectively achieved without input from an empowered constituent group.**
- **Identify public and private agencies that provide services to the deaf and hard of hearing and cooperate in the coordination and development of these services.**

**Ongoing Objectives:**

- Provide community empowerment opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing individuals.
- Provide advocacy for equal access for deaf and hard of hearing individuals.
- Provide advocacy information and presentations via email, conferences, newsletter articles, and videoconferencing.
- Produce Kentucky DeaFestival on August 30, 2008, at the Kentucky Center in Louisville.
- Provide at least one workshop to train citizens on how to effectively talk to their senators/representatives and how to track the progress of bills.

**Carryover Objectives:**

- **Increase education and awareness regarding available assistive devices for deaf and hard of hearing persons.**

**New Objectives:**

- **Develop a partnership with Emergency Preparedness advisory database for notification of deaf and hard of hearing population through pagers.**

**GOAL 5:**

**Improve support of people in our organization to create a work environment that fosters productivity and innovation.**

- **KCDHH has a strong commitment to professional development to enable a highly qualified staff to effectively implement KCDHH's current activities and new initiatives.**

**Ongoing Objectives:**

- Provide staff development.
- Ensure that staff members who provide outreach training and workshops to the public effectively share information with the public.
- Ensure that staff receives leadership, management, and skill-based training as appropriate to ensure the continuity of professional and personal growth, leadership, and management of the agency.
- Hold events to ensure the continued cohesiveness of the staff and Commissioners and to provide opportunities for individual/personal and professional growth.
- Maintain an in-house working grid that reflects team membership and the status of their goals and objectives.

**New Objectives:**

- **Use the Web site as an interactive forum with consumers and encourage them to submit agency feedback as well as recommendations for items such as new TAP equipment.**